

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claim 10, without prejudice or disclaimer, and please amend Claims 1-9, as indicated below. The following is a complete listing of claims and replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the present application:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A form processing device for reading a field data file storing information corresponding to data to be overlaid onto a defined field each of a plurality of fields in a form, and for overlaying the data [[of]] corresponding to the information stored in the read field data file onto a field each of the plurality of fields in the form, the form processing device comprising:

first determination means for determining whether a field associated with the information stored in the field data file is defined as a field onto which an external file is to be overlaid;

second determination means for determining, if the data of the field data file is description specifying an external file, when the field associated with the information stored in the field data file is defined as a field onto which an external file is to be overlaid, whether the description of the data is in a URL format information stored in the field data file is URL data; and

overlaying means for downloading the external file from a network server in compliance with Internet protocols based on the URL data and overlaying the data of the downloaded external file onto the field in the form if the description is determined to be

in a URL format by the determination means, when said second determination means determines that the information stored in the field data file is the URL data.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A form processing method for reading a field data file storing information corresponding to data to be overlaid onto a defined field each of a plurality of fields in a form, and overlaying the data [[of]] corresponding to the information stored in the read field data file onto a field each of the plurality of fields in the form, the form processing method comprising:

a first determination step of determining whether a field associated with the information stored in the field data file is defined as a field onto which an external file is to be overlaid;

a second determination step of determining, if the field data file is description specifying an external file, when the field associated with the information stored in the field data file is defined as a field onto which an external file is to be overlaid, whether the description of the data is in a URL format information stored in th field data file is URL data; and

an overlaying step of downloading the external file from a network server in complete with Internet protocols based on the URL data and overlaying the data of the downloaded external file onto the field in the form if the description is determined to be in a URL format at the determination step, when it is determined in said second determination step that the information stored in the field data file is the URL data.

Claim 3 (currently amended): A computer-readable storage medium storing a program for causing a computer to execute a form processing method of reading a field data file storing information corresponding to data to be overlaid onto a defined field each of a plurality of fields in a form, and overlaying the data [[of]] corresponding to the information stored in the read field data file onto a field each of the plurality of fields in the form; the program comprising, wherein the method comprises:

a first determination step of determining whether a field associated with the information stored in the field data file is defined as a field onto which an external file is to be overlaid;

a second determination step of determining, if the data of the field data file is description specifying an external file, when the field associated with the information stored in the field data file is defined as a field onto which an external file is to be overlaid, whether the description of the data is in a URL-format information stored in the field data file is URL data; and

an overlaying step of downloading the external file from a network server in-complete with Internet protocols based on the URL data and overlaying the data of the downloaded external file onto the field in the form if the description is determined to be in a URL-format at the determination step, when it is determined in said second determination step that the information stored in the field data file is the URL data.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The program computer-readable storage medium according to claim 3; further comprising, wherein the method further comprises:

a storing step of storing the external file, downloaded based on a predetermined URL from the network server based on the URL data, into a local drive in association with the URL data.

wherein the said overlaying step downloads includes downloading the external file specified in the field data file from the network server based on the URL data and overlays the data of overlaying the downloaded external file onto the field in the form if the description is determined to be in a URL format at the determination step associated with the information stored in the field data file, when it is determined in said second determination step that the information stored in the field data file is the URL data and the URL data does not correspond to any of URLs a URL of the external file stored at the in said storing step.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The program computer-readable storage medium according to claim 4, wherein the said overlaying step downloads includes downloading the external file from the network server based on the URL data and overlays the data of overlaying the downloaded external file onto the field in the form if associated with the information stored in the field data file, when it is determined in said second determination step that the a time stamp of the external file stored at the said storing step is older than the a time stamp of the external file in the network server specified in the field data file, the description is determined to be in a URL format at the determination step, even if the information stored in the field data file is the URL data and the URL data corresponds to the a URL of the external file stored at the in said storing step.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The program computer-readable storage medium according to claim 4[[:]], wherein [[the]] said ~~overlaying step reads the data of~~ includes reading the external file stored at the in said storing step and ~~overlays it~~ overlaying the external file onto the field of the form if ~~the description to be in a URL format at the~~ determination step, when it is determined in said second determination step that the information stored in the field data file is the URL data and the URL data corresponds to [[the]] a URL of the external file stored at the in said storing step, and furthermore, if the a time stamp of the external file stored at the in said storing step is not older than [[the]] a time stamp of the external file in the network server ~~specified in the field data file.~~

Claim 7 (currently amended): The program computer-readable storage medium according to claim 5[[:]], wherein, if an external file identical to the downloaded external file is already stored in the local drive, [[the]] said ~~storing process deletes step~~ includes deleting the external file already stored and ~~stores~~ storing the downloaded external file in the local drive.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The program computer-readable storage medium according to claim 4[[:]], wherein [[the]] said storing step ~~stores~~ includes storing the downloaded external file in the local drive if [[it]] the downloaded external file is smaller than a predetermined file capacity.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The ~~program~~ computer-readable storage medium according to claim 4[[;]], wherein [[the]] said storing step ~~deletes~~ includes deleting an external file stored in the local drive if [[the]] a file capacity of the downloaded external file is larger than [[the]] a free space of the local drive.

Claim 10 (canceled).